

sixty years

NATIONAL COUNCIL 1912-1972

A Diamond Jubilee shouldn't pass unnoticed; — even if the sixty years of National Council is only a fraction of the history of many of the more well established YMCAs. Montreal 'Y' is 121 years old now and Halifax, Charlottetown and Toronto are only two or three years behind. After all, the YMCAs that existed during the first decade of this century created the National Council and not vice versa. Since 1912 however, one of the functions of the National Council has been "extension" and many of the younger Y's owe their existence to the efforts of National Council.

REGIONAL COMMITTEES

To summarize it in an absurdly oversimplified way, National Council was created in 1912 out of three regional committees, two of which were not functioning very effectively. These were the Maritimes, the Ontario-Quebec and the Western Provinces Committees. These committees were not isolated and unrelated committees however. They were sub-committees of the International Committee which was the supervisory agency for all the Y's in North America and had been since its incorporation in 1872 just a century ago. Its roots however went back to 1854 when representatives of the newly created Y's in North America came together in the World's first International YMCA Conference to form a North American Confederation. Canadians had always played an important leadership role in the affairs of the International Committee. Many of the annual and later biennial conventions of the International Committee were held on Canadian soil. As far as the 'Y' was concerned the "great undefended border" didn't even exist as lay leaders and professional staff took positions of responsibility without regard to geography.

There were tensions occasionally; one time in the 1850's a Toronto delegate stormed out of a Confederation meeting because it refused to take a position on the question of slavery. One of the architects of the controversial "Portland Test" in 1869 was a 34 year old clergyman and active YMCA leader from St. Matthews Church in Halifax — the Reverend George Grant who three years later was hiking across Canada with Sir Sanford Fleming surveying a possible route for the Canadian Pacific Railroad and writing from "Ocean to Ocean" as preparation for his role of one of the heroes of Pierre Berton's "The National Dream." When the staff of the International Committee started to multiply and specialize, they sought the outstanding Boys' Worker on the continent and found him in Edgar Robinson from St. Stephen, New Brunswick who later founded the Boy Scouts in the United States and eventually became the World Alliance boys Work Secretary.

"SEPARATISTS"

It was to many people therefore an agonizing break that took place in 1912. At that time Canada had a population of 7¼ million spread over a gigantic piece of geography. Some doubted that it would be possible for a body created by the Ys in such a struggling and developing country to be financed adequately to provide supervisory services from coast to coast. But most agreed that it had to be better than what they were getting. Dissatisfaction with the International committee was widespread, with the Maritimes and Western provinces being particularly bitter at the lack of attention they received from the New York headquarters. The General Secretary of Winnipeg complained that he had had only four visits in ten years, two from colleagues in Minnesota, one from the General Secretary of Montreal who was on his way to a convention and one from an International Committee staff person

(who was probably trying to raise some money!).

For the most part, American leaders were courteous and considerate, feeling that if the Canadians were determined to go it alone they would receive nothing but cooperation and the hope that the bonds of brotherhood which had been so strong between the YMCAs of the two countries could be continued. There were some exceptions, the most important of which was John R. Mott. By this time he was in charge of all the overseas work of the International Committee and was shortly to become its General Secretary.

The formation of a Canadian National Council didn't happen overnight however. It was considered by the Canadians who were at the 1901 convention in Boston and again in 1904 in Buffalo. In 1905 a Canadian convention was held in Montreal and an attempt was made to set up a separate Canadian supervisory agency within the framework of the International Committee. John R. Mott didn't like it. He insisted that the International Committee should continue to have the final authority over policy in Canada. He wrote saying, "you will remember that at least four times I used particularly this language" C. M. Copeland (whose name still embellishes a Geneva Park building) and who received a copy of this letter wrote "I am quite aware that Mr. Mott used such language several times and am equally aware that it did not commend itself to the gentlemen . . .".

John R. Mott however was a man with an open mind. He came to realize that a separate organization to unify the Canadian movement was needed. He helped His Canadian friends, including C. M. Copeland, to persuade the International Committee to call a meeting of Canadians to consider a better way of developing such an organization. The meeting was held in Toronto, December 29, 1911. Many of the key 'Y' leaders, staff and volunteers, from across Canada were present. It was not a large meeting

FAVORS CANADIAN GOVERNING BODY

First National Convention of Canadian Y.M.C.A. Associations
Opens This Afternoon.

The first national convention of Young Men's Christian Associations in Canada opened in Winnipeg at 3 o'clock this afternoon. Principal McKinnon, of Portland, will deliver

but the list of those attending represents a cross section of the leadership of the 'Y' in those days and testifies to the significant role the 'Y' played in Canadian life at that time. The list includes such names as Sir Robert Falconer (President of the University of Toronto); W. M. Birks and T. W. Birks (Montreal Jewellers); H. Ryrie (Toronto Jeweller); G. H. Wood (Stock-Broker); E. R. Wood (Trust Company) and many more. Key staff people were also present, H. Ballantyne (a future National General Secretary); D. A. Budge, General Secretary of Montreal; C. M. Copeland, the Regional Secretary for Ontario-Quebec; F. G. Marshall and C. R. Sayer, the Maritime and Western region Secretaries; G. A. Warburton, General Secretary of Toronto and so on.

Many years later it became my privilege to know some of these men because they were identified with the 'Y' for the balance of their lives. They were able men with great devotion to the purposes of the Association. One would not have thought that it would have been difficult to choose a chairman for the 1911 meeting from their number but a strange thing happened. They decided that they wanted John R. Mott to chair the meeting, and he did! Even in those days, 'Y' Secretaries weren't ordinarily called on to chair important Association meetings, but the fact that Mott was, is a testimony to the regard Canadians had for his judgement and ability. At that time he was 46 years old and was to give almost another 46 years of leadership to the 'Y' in one capacity or another! He had served the 'Y' since 1886, had established the student movement on this continent and around the world, he had organized the World Service work of the International Committee which had developed associations in every corner of the globe and was to go on to even greater things as General Secretary of the International Committee of the U.S. National Council, as President of the World Alliance of YMCAs and was to be instrumental in founding the World Council of Churches and many other world organizations in recognition for

which he was to be awarded the Nobel Prize in 1946.

At that meeting it was decided to call a convention the next year (1912) to consider the organization of a "Canadian National Committee". The following principles were to characterize the new organization

- a unity of policy for Canada
- leadership, the responsibility of Canadians
- one financial appeal for supervision in Canada
- elimination of duplications
- recruiting and training Canadian professional leadership.

In addition it was agreed that all provincial organizations were to be merged into one national organization with one council, one budget and one staff for the coordination and supervision of work in Canada. Each year an annual meeting of representatives would be held and every three years a National convention of a broad cross section of the membership would take place.

These principles were welded into a draft constitution which in many ways still stands as a model of what a constitution for a national organization, which is also a federation of local autonomous units, should be. Through the years it has been tampered with (not always wisely) but even today it stands as an instructive and challenging document — not as a restricting deadening handicap as constitutions sometimes are.

In the same way that some hostesses have the annoying inability to say goodbye to their departing guests at the front door, the Canadians (courteous gentlemen to a man) avowed that their close relations with their American colleagues would continue as before. "... Nothing in this constitution", they said, "is intended to change the relations now existing between the local Associations of Canada and the International Committee".

These gracious words probably didn't fool anyone because the changes were basic and almost complete. There were however a few areas that would continue on a North American basis — World Service, International Conventions, the Year Book and the Professional Organization.

WORLD SERVICE

Continued to be a joint U.S.-Canadian effort of great significance for the next sixty years and is only now being phased out with the Canadian effort being separated from the American. Up until 1956 over 800 fraternal secretaries had been sent abroad to develop Y work and many millions of dollars had been

donated from North America to establish work in over 40 countries for which the International Committee took responsibility. The Canadian share of World Service continued to be greater than its proportion of the North American movement — whether the measurement is in terms of money donated or the number of men who served overseas as fraternal secretaries.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

were continued but lost much of their relevance for Canadians during and after the first world war. However three important conventions were held in 1931, 1946 and 1951 in which Canadians participated with great enthusiasm. The 1931 convention produced the famous Cleveland Statement of Purpose for the YMCAs of North America. Its wording is:

"The Young Men's Christian Association we regard as being in its essential genius a world wide fellowship of men and boys united in common loyalty to Jesus Christ for the purpose of building Christian personality and a Christian Society".

The acceptance of this statement represented a long delayed victory for liberal theological voices which had been trying for a new statement for thirty years. Canadians had grown impatient long before and devised their own statement in 1924 subsequently known as the Preston Statement because it was passed at a Canadian Convention held in Preston, Ontario. Both the Cleveland and Preston statements in their original form were drafted by the same man — Ernest Best, who in 1931 became the General Secretary of the Canadian National Council.

The Year Book

has continued to be a priceless possession of the YMCAs of North America. It records the statistical records and the development of the Movement in all its local manifestations every year. Researchers and students would be severely handicapped by not having access to these data which the 'Y' has been recording since the 1880s. To many local Associations it represents a tedious annual chore and it is not as accurate as it should be in recording program and membership data. Curiously enough however it is extremely accurate in recording financial data as community pressures and board members have always insisted on careful financial records. It is devoutly to be hoped that the year book continues in some form with data comparable to those accumulated over the years.

The Professional Organization

for the YMCAs of North America that continued through the years has, with the exception of World Service been the most vital and valuable joint effort of the Canadian and American movements. Professional societies were organized in every aspect and specialization of 'Y' work under the umbrella of one professional organization which has had a series of names, the best known of which was the Association of Secretaries. The professional staff across the continent unified in this way worked together on projects in the various disciplines which made up the YMCA fabric — from Physical Education to Group Work, from Counselling to Administration. Training programs and security provisions (including an insurance scheme and the YMCA Retirement fund) stabilized and thus raised the competence of the YMCA profession during succeeding decades. These close working relationships with American colleagues continue in matters of economic security and personnel work. Although there continues to be a great deal of sharing of leadership and resources across the border in matters having to do with professional development, Canadians in the 1960s formed their own professional society currently called the Canadian Association of 'Y' Personnel.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE

The purpose of the 1912 meeting therefore was to form a national organization for Canada. It was decided to hold it in Winnipeg because of the three regional organizations in Canada, the west seemed to be the most reluctant. At this point in our history the west was experiencing its greatest period of expansion. The future seemed to belong to that part of the country. The decade between 1904 and 1913 saw two and a half million immigrants come to Canada (our greatest period of immigration, far exceeding even that of the post World War II era). The big attraction was the great western plains which promised prosperity for unlimited numbers. Western cities were being established and were growing fast. Any good self-respecting city had to have a YMCA and many were established often in cities whose population hadn't yet grown to the point where the facilities that were built were economically justified. Some of them were struggling for survival and needed help. The International Committee in New York might as well have been on another planet for all the good it was in helping these struggling associations. Possible help from Eastern Canada was regarded with some

suspicion too. The Liberals had called an October election in 1911 and Laurier was defeated. One of the important planks in the Conservative platform was the protection of developing Canadian industry — which of course was mostly located in the east. Western YMCA folk were not strangers to this anti-eastern feeling and it would seem that the easterners knew it. In any event it seemed to be good strategy to hold the first meeting on western soil and Winnipeg as the strongest of the western Associations was the logical host.

The meeting was well attended. We still have the original book that the delegates were supposed to sign in when they arrived in Winnipeg; it may not be the complete list but it does contain some interesting names whose continuing contributions to Canadian YMCAs are well known. The three regions were represented as follows: the West 56, Ontario-Quebec 50, the Maritimes 13. There are also 10 signatures from Americans who were there presumably to observe on behalf of the International Committee.

The Ontario-Quebec and the Maritime Committees came to the conference ready to approve the constitution and establish a National Council. But the Western group hadn't yet decided so the conference adjourned briefly to give them an opportunity to hold a caucus and decide. They decided favourably and the constitution was passed unanimously.

W. M. Birks of Montreal was elected the first President and G. H. Wood of Toronto, Chairman of the Executive Committee. These were logical choices because of their previous prominence in YMCA affairs, but the selection of Charles Bishop as the first National General Secretary came as a surprise. Although he was doing student work in the West and was very young — logical prerequisites — he was not known nationally. It has been assumed that John R. Mott had an important voice in his selection for several reasons.

— Bishop was University trained, including theology

— he was engaged in student work (Mott's portfolio)

— he was interested in foreign work (Mott's prime interest)

— he had never been a local General Secretary! (Mott's greatest source of opposition).

PREMISES

The new National Council offices took over the quarters occupied by the

FOREMEN'S CLUBS
National Council of Y.M.C.A.
immediate and definite
possible the appoint-
time National Y.M.
devoted to the Fore-
ment in Canada.

Ontario and Quebec committee at 15 Toronto St. in Toronto, in which city it has always remained. During World War I, it moved to offices at 88 Adelaide Street East. In the late 1920's it established offices on the second floor of Toronto. Central 'Y' on College Street where it remained throughout the depression when at certain points the staff was reduced to as few as five. With the expansion of National Council services to include War Services during World War II, larger quarters were needed and 21 Dundas Square became a famous YMCA address until 1950. During the war, two floors and more of this large building were required but in the period following the war, National Council activities were confined to the fifteenth floor. When rents started to go up this became too rich for the Council's blood and a doctor's office and residence at 15 Spadina Road was purchased. The decade of the 50's again saw considerable expansion of the Council's work to the point where staff members were occupying offices in the cellar, the attic, and renting space from a labour union next door and the Bible College across the street. By 1960 the National Council's "Canadian YMCA Youth Fund" campaign was beginning to take shape and after occupying temporary quarters at 88 Eglinton Ave. E. for a two year period, the move was made to 2160 Yonge Street to a building built to National Council specifications with room for further expansion.

FIRST STAFF

The first two years under Charles Bishop's secretaryship augured well for the future of the new national organization. A staff was appointed with an Associate General Secretary C. M. Copeland (operations and field work); a Phys. Ed. Secretary (John Brown); Transportation (Jim Dudley); Immigration (Bill Lee); Boys' Work (Taylor Statten); County Work (E.P. Stewart); Student Work (E. Clarke) and Geneva Park (Henry Yeigh). The budget for all this was to be \$52,000 per annum. Money was raised through contributions of member Associations, campaigns conducted by area committees and

at Khaki University

Free cigarettes distributed was 1,200,000
over 150,000 newspapers and
sold over the counter.
Had 300,000.

solicitation of gifts from business men in Toronto and Montreal. Although this produced only about \$45,000 each year, it seemed to be sufficient and there were no great financial worries.

WORLD WAR I

Then came the war.

World War I changed every aspect of Canadian life not just for four years but permanently. The YMCA was affected as much if not more than most institutions in Canadian life. There is not space to review here the magnificent contribution made to the welfare of both armed forces and civilians by the 'Y' in that desperate era. The matter has been debated ad nauseum even to the point where the 'Y' was used as a scapegoat by some who poured their agony and frustrations on the 'Y' because there was no one else visible to accept blame. The war effort of the 'Y' would not have been possible had the National Council not been organized in 1912. The pity is perhaps that it had not been organized a decade earlier when the Canadians wanted to do it — there would have been time to develop a strong organization with resources available to marshal the vast effort that was required. As it was the 'Y' effort was a miracle of inventiveness, dedication and improvisation.

EXPANSION AND RETRENCHMENT

Back home program was expanding rapidly particularly in the field of Boys' Work. With Taylor Statten at the helm, Boys' Work Boards sprang up all over the country. The Tuxis Movement with the Trail Ranger program showed promise of reaching every boy in Protestant English speaking Canada. The Soldiers of the Soil program involved thousands of boys who would spend periods of the year working in farmer's fields particularly at harvest time — a pattern that has been emulated in recent times by Red China.

By 1920 National Council had grown to unplanned for dimensions. At one point there were 18 full time secretaries on the National Boys' Work Staff alone plus another dozen who gave part of their time to boys work.

Other departments were expanding although not on this scale. It was perhaps inevitable that retrenchment had to take place. Finances were an important part

of it, but not the whole story. The Student Secretary organized a conference that took the Student Movement out of the YMCA (and YWCA) creating the Student Christian Movement. The church centered boys work left the 'Y' and organized the National Boys' Work Board, becoming one of the streams that eventually came together to form the Canadian Council of Churches. County Work, although it had had many spectacular successes in affecting human experience proved to be financially impractical and so it disappeared too. For instance, Cliff Schell and Hiles Templin were recruited as 'Y' Secretaries and Harold Rea first became involved as a result of one project on the eastern shore of Lake Huron. The writer had his first exposure to 'Y' work in a camp conducted by R.C. Sidenius the last of the County Work secretaries who worked in Wentworth County.

GENEVA PARK

Geneva Park deserves — and indeed, already has — a written history of its own. Its roots go back four years before National Council was formed, as a training centre for the Ontario-Quebec region. It became part of National Council in 1912 playing a vital role for all of the 60 years of the Council's history particularly in the field of secretarial training. For many years — until the 1930's — it offered the only training available in Canada for those aspiring to Association Work. The largest groups of YMCA Secretaries ever brought together in Canada were at Geneva Park in the years following World War I — 200 secretaries would sometimes be there at the same time doing courses in Boys' Work, Physical Education, Administration, Religion and those aspects of skill and knowledge necessary to be a YMCA Secretary. Although its training role diminished during the 1930's and the war years it was always an important conference centre for the Canadian Movement. The training program picked up considerably after World War II, but it remained for the Canadian YMCA Youth Fund under Harold Rea's leadership and the Canadian YMCA Centennial Project campaign to make it the significant conference and training centre that we know today.

PERSONNEL

When the Council was organized in 1912, provision was made in the constitution for what we now call personnel services. Recruitment and training were seen as the major task in the early years of the Council but it wasn't until 1923 that a committee was organized with this

assignment and some five years later before a full time Secretary (R.E.G. Davis) was appointed. Meanwhile the work was developed with men like Dr. George Pidgeon, the distinguished churchman, as chairman and Harry Ballantyne, National General Secretary doing the Secretarial chores in addition to his many other administrative responsibilities. The National Council President R.F. McWilliams who much later became Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba also gave important leadership to this development together with Dr. E.M. Best, Professor of Religious Education in Montreal and later to be National General Secretary (1931-1937) and still alter President of Springfield College.

One of the outcomes of this early concern for personnel was the beginning of the Fellowship Training Plan. It began at McGill University arranged by E.M. Best with the candidates working in the Montreal YMCA while in college. The first candidate was a young Boys' Work Secretary from Sherbrooke — Henry F. Hall, the next was from Ottawa — Kenneth Norris and the following year Clarence McCully from Saint John entered. These first three "fellowship men" all received first class standing, giving the project great prestige in both 'Y' and University circles and all three spent the balance of their careers in the Montreal 'Y'. Norris and Hall's names will always be identified with the development of Sir George Williams University and McCully was the financial administrator of the Montreal 'Y' for the next 35 years. The Fellowship Training Plan was developed in other 'Y's in University cities and there were times in the 40's and 50's when nearly 200 young men and women were preparing themselves for the YMCA profession in this way.

POST WAR REBUILDING

The 1920's and 1930's were exciting yet problem filled years at National Council. The problems were mostly financial. The budget in 1918 had been \$3 million (including war work) in 1919 it was \$300,000 (not including War Services) but by 1923 it was \$150,000 and the staff for "home services" had dropped from 54 to about 7. Associations across the country were seriously in debt because of the neglect of local work in the all out war effort and could do little to help. A period of rebuilding followed. Thanks to the ability of a series of innovative secretaries and laymen working together in a mutually supportive relationship great progress was made. Although finances did not permit a very large staff for the next 20 years, it was a carefully selected group of colourful intelligent men willing to experiment with new concepts and new

programs. Fortunately a large number of laymen who had been recruited to the many committees of the Council in previous years remained loyal and to a large degree made up for the severe staff losses.

Physical Education was booming. The concepts of sportsmanship and games, of conditioning and leadership given to the world a generation earlier by Luther

Gulick and his colleagues at Springfield College (including James Naismith from the Ottawa Valley who invented basketball) were now bearing fruit.

Boys' Work got caught up in the new educational philosophy that came out of Columbia University and the disciples of John Dewey. Boys' Work Secretaries went to conferences in the United States where Harrison Elliott, George Coe and others of that school were active leaders. In turn these men would come back to Geneva Park for Canadian Conferences. The discipline of "Group Work" evolved in the YMCA as a result of this ferment and youth work in the 'Y' would never again have a paternalistic regimented approach.

Adult Education was another field where the leadership of National Council made an impact which was felt in many segments of Canadian life. It ranged from a new concern for public affairs to the development of new universities. The first YMCA discussion group that the writer participated in was in the winter of 1931 in the Hamilton 'Y'. Some of the subjects we discussed included The Gold Standard, Disarmament, Trouble in Manchuria, Sex Education and Liberal Theology. Enthusiasm was such that if the Thursday Night Volleyball House league cut into our time we would come back on Sunday morning at 9 o'clock.

The Khaki University developed by the YMCA in England during the war and which was of great value in the period immediately after the Armistice when so many of the armed forces had prolonged waits overseas, had a carry-over with a group of men who had great enthusiasm for the role of higher education. Dr. H.M. Tory was one of these. He came from a prominent Halifax family whose members were always active in the

YMCA. He himself came to the Khaki University from the University of Alberta. His influence was strong in developing opportunities for higher education in Canada in the years that followed. Many years later Carleton University was the ultimate result of a committee of the Ottawa YMCA, and York University was the outcome of a series of meetings held by the North Toronto YMCA. Sir George Williams University which started as an outgrowth of program in the Montreal YMCA was the inspiration for much of this,

especially the concern it has always had for providing educational opportunities for adults who had already embarked on careers.

BALLANTYNE AND BEST

Much fruitless discussion is often engaged in by "Y" folk concerning what gave the extraordinary vitality to the National Council in the period between the wars. R.F. McWilliams, Gerald Birks, E.M. Best, Bill Cook, Dick Davis, Joe McCulley, Sydney Smith and many more were all leading participants. I don't think any one person can be given credit for all this creative ferment but my personal nomination of one whose role was crucial would be Harry Ballantyne. He was the careful systematic administrator who "filled in" as National Secretary between Bishop who left in 1923 and Best who came in 1931. But he was there before and remained after. He was most effective in recruiting and encouraging laymen of great distinction by helping them develop significant projects and see them through to completion. He was interested in all aspects of the work, encouraging colleagues to follow their own interests and talents. He seems not to have created many of the exciting ideas of these years, but he could recognize a good idea when he saw one and could help the originator make it a reality. It was he who modestly claimed that he didn't have the qualifications to be National Secretary and in 1931 persuaded several leaders to raise additional money so they could obtain the services of E.M. Best for National Secretary.

During these years the National Council became a national force in its own right. It had been created as a federation of Associations to provide them with services which they could not provide for themselves and to represent them at the national and international level. It continued to do this, but not always to the satisfaction of local administrators. Complaints were particularly loud during the 1930's when local General Secretaries were complaining that the National Staff under E.M. Best's direction were getting involved in all sorts of national issues and projects that did not bear directly on their obligation to serve the needs of the member Associations. As a program participant during those years, I was aware of those dissatisfactions but I also had the impression that the program secretaries of that time, particularly in the academic world were full of admiration for the work of the National Council, which they saw as quite distinct from the struggling local Associations carrying on their routine programs. On

Canadian Y.M.C.A. Study Makes Progress

Study Commit- All are business care

the other hand many persons in the business community became rather impatient with these "radicals" at the National Council who failed to come to grips with real life as they saw it at the community level.

HOSKING

It fell to R.S. Hosking to readjust this balance during his 20 years (1938-58) as National General Secretary. As a member of his staff from 1947 on, I soon learned that the most important thing we had to do was serve the member Associations. This we did, and to a considerable degree it resulted in a better family feeling in the Movement across the Country. But some of the electrifying excitement of the creative Canadians who had served under the National Council banner could not be maintained merely to provide services to member Associations.

BEATON AND SCHELL WORLD WAR II

Dick Hosking had hardly been installed as the new General Secretary when World War II descended. By this time the National Council had had enough experience in organizational work that it was able both to mount a huge War Services enterprise and at the same time maintain a reasonable amount of resources to keep the home services from disintegrating as they had to some degree in World War I. J.W. Beaton of Montreal headed YMCA War Services which placed 725 supervisors in service with the armed forces in Canada and abroad. C.A. Schell who had become a 'Y' Secretary in the year that National Council was founded provided the administrative back up for both Beaton in War Services and Hosking in Home Services through the war and for 15 years thereafter. He was a worthy successor to Harry Ballantyne and on countless occasions his wisdom saved both the National Council and member Associations from financial or other forms of administrative disaster. But he

Public Recreation

Executive Committee of "The Y and Public Recreation Council" met at a meeting recently when the Commission was reviewing the Area Conference. It was

was much more than just a financial administrator. More than any living man he has seen the National Council in all its phases, having participated with program people when they reached for new approaches to human services as well as slugging it out on the front line of debt reduction campaigns both nationally and locally. For about 40 years he had the happy faculty of being "where the action was" in the Canadian YMCA. He was the keynote speaker at the first 'Y' conference the writer ever attended in 1929. His insights go well beyond the exigencies of administering the budgets of what he likes to call "eleemosynary agencies".

YM-YWCA'S

Cliff Schell was General Secretary of the 'Y' in Windsor when they moved into a new building with the YWCA in the mid 20's which eventually resulted in the union of the two Associations in Windsor. From that beginning the development of local amalgamations of YMCA's & YWCA's sprang until there are now 27 of them from Dartmouth to Victoria. This type of development is unique to Canada in that it has been approved by both the YWCA of Canada and the National Council of YMCA's. Over the years the two National bodies have worked together in harmony and with a good spirit of cooperation. Some of the YM-YWCA's however, have not always been happy with the services and relationship with the two national bodies. From time to time commissions have been set up to explore ways and means of improving these relationships. The usual results are strikingly similar — reduce overlapping, agree on similar policies, work more closely together, etc. etc. Guidelines of good standards for united Associations have been developed and considerable progress has been made — on paper and in practice. But always there is a point of view that the two national bodies should unite. This has not been a majority opinion up to now but it is consistent and strong. The YMCA National Council in 1959 agreed, following the "Dunlop-Dewar" report, that it was willing to consider a union at the national level which was probably "inevitable". The word "inevitable" was challenged by the YW, making the point that the YWCA has a special mission in Canadian life — to

develop the, as yet unrealized, potential for leadership on the part of women and girls — and in spite of several subsequent studies, including one being conducted currently, the situation remains unchanged. Except for a few impatient leaders, the Council has not pressed the cause of national union, although it has expressed a willingness to embark on the task of working out all the agreements that would be necessary to effect such a development. Many YWCA leaders still remain unconvinced that their basic goals could be achieved if the two movements were to unite.

NATIONAL PRESIDENTS

During the late 1950's and until the present time, National Council was blessed with a series of remarkable Presidents. Their leadership elevated the Council once again to a position where it could take pride in its own strengths. Instead of being merely the humble servant of its members, it started to become a voice in national affairs once more, while giving more positive leadership to Association affairs. The President who "broke the mould" and set a new pattern was Basil Tippet who insisted that the officers of National Council meet every week and plan together the changes and new departures that needed to be made. The officers responded. Regional conferences were organized, laymen did regular cross country (and international) trips. A new plan of organization and changed portfolios were developed for the national staff and a program of enlistment of key leaders in the work of the Council was initiated. J. Hiles Templin succeeded him, followed the plan and was tireless in visiting Associations across the Country building a unity and national fellowship that had been lacking for some time.

As a result of this intensive involvement in the work of the Council it became clear to the officers that it was inadequately financed, poorly housed and severely lacking in resources to do the job that was seen to be necessary. Meetings were held with the key General Secretaries of the larger city Associations, with business leaders and with the council staff. It was decided that a major financial campaign would be necessary.

To the next President, John Magwood, fell the task of "making it happen". It was agreed that it could happen only if the right man could be found to give leadership. He had to be a business man known nationally as a man of integrity whose life purposes were consistent with YMCA goals. W. Harold Rea was the obvious choice. Fortunately we had the right people to approach him because

John Magwood was a member of the same Church and Hiles Templin was born in the same town — Kincardine, Ontario. So we all took Harold to lunch; He didn't say "yes" but he didn't say "no". Some weeks later after several meetings in his office and sharing our plans and aspirations with him, and after a trip of assessment to Geneva Park (which he said looked the same as the last time he'd seen it, which was in 1928), he said "yes". This was in the summer of 1961. Ten months later on an objective of \$1,750,000 we had raised \$2,100,000. Every section of the country responded, \$250,000 were donated by members of the National Board. YMCA Secretaries gave \$35,000 including members of the national staff who gave 10 percent of their annual income, spread over a three year period. With the proceeds of the campaign we:

- built a new headquarters for National Council at 2160 Yonge St.

- built Geneva Court and rehabilitated Geneva Park

- allocated \$185,000 for recruiting, training and development of YMCA Secretaries

- allocated \$400,000 for the establishment of new Associations

- allocated \$80,000 for research and lay leadership training.

Harold Rea later assumed the Presidency of National Council for a period of three years during which time a team of management consultants was engaged to develop an organization plan that would enable the Council to use its resources most effectively to achieve its goals. Another "quiet" campaign was held to complete the job at Geneva Park out of which a residence for 100 more guests was built and a conference centre with an auditorium was completed as a Centennial project for the Canadian YMCA. It was opened in the summer of 1966 in advance of Canada's Centennial so that it could be functioning well by the time 1967 dawned.

Maurice Strong succeeded Harold Rea as President and promoted a series of National — local conferences culminating in the conference held at York University in June 1968. This was attended by 500 delegates from nearly every Association, the largest conference held by the Canadian YMCA in generations. Half of the delegates were under 30 years of age many of them still in their teens. This conference gave to the Movement a set of "York Goals" the implementation of which fell to the next President John Carson. These goals were agreements made by the Movement for

priorities for the next four years. They had to do with

- increasing the proportion of youth, women and minority groups in Association decision making bodies.

- developing a new Statement of Purpose

- extending the scope of the 'Y' into the community.

- strengthening professional leadership and lay leadership

- developing methods for the 'Y' to express itself more effectively on social issues

- increasing the financial resources for the Council and for local work

- improving communication throughout the movement

Conferences were held in every region on these goals and considerable progress was made in implementation. National Staff members were deployed with work on these goals as a priority for a year. The services of Dr. H. Dimock of Sir George Williams University were retained to guide this progress. At the next Annual Meeting, President John Carson elaborated on these goals and challenged the 'Y' to be more effective in working for national unity and in serving the deprived members of Canadian society.

Many of the tasks implied in these goals required careful study and consultation with leaders in member Associations. Under the guidance of the next President, Holbrook Davis, Task Forces were created to work on those questions. One worked on lay structure and organization, another on United Appeal relations, another on financing the National Council and two more in cooperation with the YWCA on questions relating to the place of YM-YWCA's and the relations between the two Movements.

REPRESENTING THE MOVEMENT

At different periods in its history the National Council has devoted various proportions of its resources and energies to representing the Canadian YMCA with other national bodies, with governments and with international. The original constitution placed great emphasis on this and that clause remains in the constitution. In recent years a great deal more attention and time is being given to this function. The creation of an office in Ottawa in 1970 with full time staff increased the opportunities for the YMCA to enhance its role in relation

with other national agencies, with departments of the federal government and with international bodies such as the World Alliance and United Nations. A great deal remains to be done because the 'Y' has not been known well at this level in recent years.

A similar situation had existed with regard to representation at the international level. Until 1967 the Canadian 'Y' was a part of the International Committee which took responsibility for overseas extension work and relationships with other Movements. The National Council of Canada was represented at the World Alliance but it was a nominal relationship and the tendency was to "let the folks in New York do it".

In the late 1940's Hiles Templin was asked to represent the Canadian 'Y' at World Alliance meetings. He was told it was not an onerous responsibility and that there was no need to worry about attending all the meetings. He's not the kind of man who responds enthusiastically to assignments of that nature. If a task isn't worth doing completely, it's not worth doing, is his usual point of view. Anyway he went. He soon became Chairman of the World Boys' Work Committee and chaired two major World Boys' Work Conferences in France and Holland. He continued to make his lonely pilgrimages to world meetings and gradually interested other Canadians in the importance of Canada's responsibility for giving leadership at the world level. At the World Council meeting in Geneva in 1961, Canada had a fair sized delegation. In 1965 in Japan it was larger (21) and still larger in 1969 in Nottingham where Canada impressed the World Movement by having over half its voting delegation under 25 years of age. All of the standing committees and the two commissions of the World Alliance now have Canadian members and Canadians such as Ken Lawson, Niels Petersen and Maurice Strong, in addition to Hiles Templin, have chaired or are chairing some of these important world groups.

Those of us who believe strongly in the responsibility Canada has at this level and the significance of the contribution it has to make, were greatly encouraged this year when Rix Rogers the new General Secretary of National Council, in spelling out to the National Board the priorities he saw for the period immediately ahead, placed participation in the affairs of the World Alliance high on the list of these priorities.

Ottawa 1972
Les Vipond

(In developing this sketchy outline of the history of National Council, the

writer has made generous use of:

"The YMCA in Canada" by Murray Ross and

"History of the YMCA in North America" by C. Howard Hopkins. In addition, C. A. Schell has helped by writing his recollections of several aspects of Council activity through the years. He and J. W. Patterson of Toronto are the only living men we know of, who were in the 'Y' when the Council was organized and who remained active in it for the past 60 years. I was born long(?) after the Council was organized but my father attended National Council Annual Meetings as early as 1917 to which he would often refer. I had the privilege of knowing most of the men referred to in this article and can recollect many discussions with such men as E. M. Robinson, John R. Mott, Harry Ballantyne, George Patterson, Lou Buckley, Ernie Best and Charlie Bishop, not to mention the young fellows like Hiles Templin, Cliff Schell, Dick Davis, Dick Hosking and Pat Patterson.

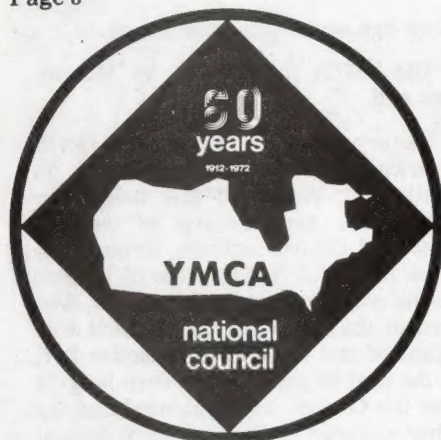
COMMENT:

Les Vipond, with his characteristic modesty has neglected to mention the breadth of his own contribution to the growth of the Council over the twenty-five year period of his services on the National Staff, notably as General Secretary from 1958 to 1970.

He joined the Council in a professional capacity in 1947 as Secretary for Boys' Work and successively served as Secretary for Personnel Services and Executive Secretary for Personnel, Program and Research. At the present time he is making a significant contribution to the Council as its Ottawa plenipotentiary.

Those of us who have worked with Les over the years have come to respect his sound judgment in weighing the divergent influences that have contributed to the growth of the YMCA's impact on the national scene and his ability to reconcile varying staff and lay points of view. Truly, his balance, and his ability to maintain a warm personal relationship with so many over such a long period of the Council's history entitled him to a preminent place in its annals.

(John M. Magwood, Q.C.,
Past President,
The National Council of YMCAs of
Canada)



LEADERSHIP THROUGH THE YEARS

PRESIDENTS OF NATIONAL COUNCIL

W. H. Birks, Montreal, 1912-1914
G. H. Wood, Toronto, 1915-1920
Abner Kingman, Montreal, 1921-1923
Hon. R. F. McWilliams, Winnipeg, 1924-1928
J. A. Machado, Ottawa, 1929-1931
Gerald W. Birks, Montreal, 1932-1933
Edward E. Reid, London, 1933-1936
Russel T. Kelley, Hamilton, 1937-1938
Dr. Sidney E. Smith, Winnipeg, 1939-1941
Lloyd E. Shaw, Halifax, 1942-1943
H. Jasper Humphrey, O.B.E., Montreal, 1944-1949
John M. Pritchard, Montreal, 1950-1956
C. F. Basil Tippet, Toronto, 1957-1958
J. Hiles Templin, Hamilton, 1959-1960
John M. Magwood, Q.C., Toronto, 1961-1962
W. Harold Rea, Toronto, 1963-1965
Maurice F. Strong (now United Nations), 1966-1967
John J. Carson, Ottawa, 1968-1969
Holbrook R. Davis, Montreal, 1970—

CHAIRMEN OF THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

H. M. Peacock, 1927-1931
R. G. Dingman, 1932-1934
Chas. Bauckham, 1935-1937
W. J. Lind, 1938-1939
H. R. Frost, 1939-1945
J. A. Northey, 1946-1955
George E. Edmonds, Q.C. 1956-1960
Bruce A. MacDougall, 1960-1967
John F. Girvan, 1967-1968

In 1968 name changed to NATIONAL BOARD

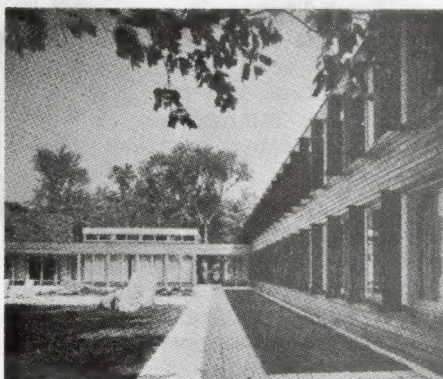
William H. Woodrow, 1968-1970
Niels F. Peterson, 1970 —

GENERAL SECRETARIES

Dr. Charles W. Bishop, 1912-1921
Harry Ballantyne, 1922-1931, 1936-1937
Dr. Ernest M. Best, 1932-1936
Dr. Richard Hosking, 1938-1958
Leslie Vipond, 1958-1970
Rix G. Rogers, 1971 —



2160 Yonge Street, Toronto



Geneva Park, Ontario

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